

Notes from Tom Kimmell – Irrigation Association October 9, 2003

- I. Residential irrigation is one of the largest water users (particularly in summer) in an urban setting.
  - A.) One component of an irrigation system is the controller, which electronically operates the sprinkler system.
    - 1.) These controllers can be very advanced with multiple programs, multiple start times, multiple zones, water budgets, remotely programmable with a battery backup should the power fail.
  - They could even start your coffee brewing in the morning.
- II.
  - B.) They have only one weakness-
    - 1.) The homeowner is the operator
    - 2.) Tendency is to adjust to the driest time of the year
    - 3.) This results in over watering by about 30% annually
  - C.) Irrigation Industry & water purveyors/Supplies recognized problem.
  - D.) Many innovative companies were developing passive types of irrigation controllers.
- III These controllers change the way water is applied in landscapes. Now a sensor can monitor soil moisture or calculate Evaporation/Transpiration. (explain E/T)

Instead of time determining how much water is applied. The plants can make that call.

Under the Irrigation Association Banner-10 major water purveyors and 10 irrigation companies met last year to discuss and examine these technologies.

This first thing decided was that we needed a common name for the varied technologies. IA came up with **SWAT-Smart Water Application technologies**.

Next-**Test protocols**- so effectiveness could be measured. The project was handled by the Center for Irrigation Technology also known as the International Center for Water Technology.

**Market transformation**-Outside firm was retained to assess social engineering necessary to modify the marketplace.

The protocols and market transformation will be discussed next month at the Irrigation Association Show in San Diego.

A lot of water conservation energy and enthusiasm have gone into **SWAT** and it was done in a collaborative way.

May offer the best opportunity for labeling of irrigation equipment as it would have the biggest impact and would be the easiest to do.

Ron Wolfarth, Rain Bird, will cover the industry's assessment of product labeling.